



**Written testimony from: Martha Pint, Co-President
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**Hearing Location: Wichita State University, Hughes Metroplex
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This testimony is: written only ; spoken only ; both

Thank you for providing an opportunity for our community to present information to you on a matter of great importance to all Kansans.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that supports citizen involvement in public policy at all levels of government. The League has been actively involved in advocating for creation of fair districts in Kansas for many decades.

In the absence of detailed 2020 Census data, we cannot make suggestions about the composition of fair districts at this time. However, we would like to point out two aspects of past redistricting practice that are troublesome from our nonpartisan perspective and which should not be continued in the current effort in the interest of achieving the fairest possible outcome.

First, we urge the Committees to reject the proposed redistricting guideline that reads "Contests between incumbent members of the Legislature or the State Board of Education will be avoided whenever possible." The guideline appears to be aimed at incumbent protection which may lead to unfairness in future elections. Similarly, the Committees should see to it that incumbent legislators' home addresses are not included in the redistricting database. While those addresses are available publicly, including them in the database makes incumbent protection too convenient during the mapmaking process.

Second, the practice of including election results and/or voter registration information in the redistricting database should likewise be ended. The only reason for such data to be available to map makers is to allow them to pick and choose 'safe' areas for inclusion in new districts. The League has long held that practices such as these stand in the way of creating fair districts.

In addition, I would like to comment on the arrangements for this "Listening Tour." Hearings on a significant matter like redistricting are important both for legislators who must make decisions and for the public whose voices may be either stifled or amplified by those decisions. The League appreciates the Committees' willingness to devote days to listening across the state as has been done in the

past. However, the current schedule and the short notice provided prior to the start of this Tour has made it difficult for some ordinary Kansans to prepare and present pertinent information that will help you in your deliberations.

Finally, no one, including yourselves, has had an opportunity to see detailed 2020 Census results and assess how our districts must change to maintain equality of population. We understand that the Census figures will be available this week. We encourage the committees to prepare maps and reports of the current districts using the 2020 Census results and to make those maps and reports available to the public. That way all of us will be able to begin the process of analyzing where changes in district lines must be made. Communities across the state and legislators equipped with that information will be able to assess the impact of population shifts.

We are glad to learn that the committees will continue to accept written testimony after these hearings are complete. We ask that you also consider following up with additional, well publicized, and widely accessible opportunities for Kansans to participate in your information gathering effort after the Census data are available and prior to the start of the 2022 Session. Such opportunities, especially if publicized at least two weeks in advance, would enable you to learn specifically what your constituents identify as their communities of interest and fair representative districts. The Committees will save much time and expense if those opportunities encourage submission of virtual testimony.

Thank you for your time and attention today.